

## **Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon**

**Minutes for monthly meeting held in person at New Lebanon Town Hall, August 9, 2021**

**Present:** CAC members David Farren, Robert Gilson, Donald Lamonaca, Adelia Moore, Peg Munves, Steve Powers; Guests Marc Anthonisen, Deborah Gordon, Tyler Fogg

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. The minutes for the monthly meeting on July 14, 2021, were approved and will be sent to the Town Clerk for posting.

**Tyler Fogg:** Tyler Fogg was introduced as a potential new member of the CAC. Tyler is a relatively new resident of New Lebanon. As the Trails Manager for the Berkshire Natural Resources Council, he and his team maintain about 60 miles of trails as well as cutting new trails in Berkshire County. Tyler is enthusiastic about conservation and interested in working with school children. He has organized moth nights and butterfly walks, among other programs.

- **Critical Environmental Areas:** The CAC has received a grant to work with the Hudson River Estuary Program to identify and justify Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) in New Lebanon. The initial focus will be cool ravines and the Warm Mineral Spring, the only such spring in New York State. The deed for the spring requires that its water be available to the public in perpetuity. It serves, or once served, the household water needs for about 60 residences in the Springs and across Rte. 22. E-coli and coliform counts have been a problem. Every CEA requires a buffer zone that will require surrounding landowners to agree to the CEA protection. In the future, it might be prudent to also address the vulnerability of the Shaker Swamp where there are 35 abutters. Marc Anthonisen noted that about 50% of the town's population lives within the flood plain. The same percentage lives within a half mile of the Rail Trail. Monthly training calls with Gretchen Stevens and Estuary Program staff will continue, possibly through the end of the year. Deb Gordon is backing away from several of her liaison assignments, including the CAC and CSC, but will continue as CEA team member.
- **Birds of Prey:** The Sharon, Connecticut, Audubon Center will present a Birds of Prey program for the Summer Youth Program at Shatford Park on August 19 starting at 12:30 P.M. thanks to Bob Gilson.
- **Town Picnic:** About 300 people showed up for the Town picnic on August 1. The CAC table with posters created by Peg Munves was well received but no one requested guided tours of the Trees for Tribes plantings. Supervisor Houghtling recognized Peg as the CAC's "stellar volunteer."
- **Trees for Tribes:** Peg suggested that we aim for more educational presentations to the public. We will prepare a report for the Town Board, slated for October. About 120 seedlings still need to be planted.
- **Source Water Protection:** Water conservation and safe household water is in the hands of the landowners. Single family residences do not require Site Plan Review. People are prone to shutting down when the issue of protecting their water arises. Peg recommends more water testing throughout town and the possibility of building sampling costs into the 2022 CAC budget. Budget requests will be due in mid-September.
- **Planning Board:** The meeting on July 21 included a Public Hearing for the Nokomis Ecology Center proposal, with a well-coordinated protest by neighbors on Wadsworth and Kelly Roads. The Public Hearing for the RV Storage facility was rescheduled for August 18.
- **Comprehensive Plan Update:** The draft Comprehensive Plan Update will be posted online. Public forums for feedback have been scheduled for 9/21 (evening) and 9/25 (morning).
- **Tyler Fogg:** The CAC voted unanimously to recommend that the Town Board appoint Tyler Fogg to the CAC to fill the unexpired term of Paul Rix.

The next CAC monthly meeting will be September 13, 2021, at 6:30 P.M. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

*Respectfully submitted by Robert Gilson*